

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

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INFO USDEL MBFR VIENNA

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

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S E C R E T USNATO 3095

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: TIME BETWEEN PHASES: DUTCH POSITION

REF: A) STATE 110784 (NOTAL); B) USNATO 2552 DTG 071900Z MAY
(NOTAL); C) USNATO 2741 DTG 151900Z MAY (NOTAL)

1. NETHERLANDS DELEGATION OFFICER (MEESMAN) ON JUNE 3 DISCUSSED
WITH MISSION OFFICER THE DUTCH POSITION ON U.S. PROPOSAL TO SHORTEN
THE TIME BETWEEN PHASES. MEESMAN SAID THAT HE WAS NOW UNDER
FIRM INSTRUCTIONS TO PROPOSE AMENDING THE U.S. PROPOSAL.

2. THE LANGUAGE HE WILL PROPOSE AT JUNE 5 SPC MEETING, TO REPLACE
PARA 3 B, REF A IS AS FOLLOWS: "THE ALLIED NEGOTIATORS WOULD ALSO
BE AUTHROIZED TO PROPOSE TO THE EAST THAT THE PHASE I AGREEMENT
SHOULD CONTAIN A PROVISION SPECIFYING THAT PHASE I REDUCTIONS
SHOULD BE COMPLETED WITHIN 12 MONTHS FROM ENTRY INTO FORCE
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OF THE AGREEMENT BUT NOT LATER THAN 24 MONTHS AFTER THE DATE
OF SIGNATURE."

3. MEESMAN SAID THE DUTCH BELIEVED THAT THE ALLIES NEEDED TO

LINK THE MAXIMUM TIME FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF PHASE I WITHDRAWALS TO SIGNATURE OF THE PHASE I AGREEMENT. HE EXPLAINED THAT HIS AUTHORITIES DID NOT REALLY SEEM CONCERNED THAT THE U.S. OR THE SOVIET UNION WOULD DELAY BETWEEN SIGNATURE AND RATIFICATION, THUS DELAYING THE BEGINNING OF THE MAXIMUM TIME FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF PHASE I WITHDRAWALS. THE DUTCH HAD NO DOUBT THAT CONGRESS WOULD ACT EXPEDITIOUSLY IN GIVING THE PHASE I AGREEMENT WHATEVER LEGISLATIVE APPROVAL IS NEEDED.

4. MEESMAN SAID HIS AUTHORITIES WERE ACTUALLY CONCERNED THAT UNDER THE U.S. PROPOSAL SOME OF THE OTHER ALLIES COULD DELAY RATIFICATION OF THE PHASE I AGREEMENT FOR A SIGNIFICANT PERIOD OF TIME, AND THAT THIS COULD EVENTUALLY SLOW THE PACE OF THE PHASE II NEGOTIATIONS, WHERE THE DUTCH WILL BE GETTING THEIR GROUND FORCE REDUCTIONS. HE CITED ITALY'S LONG DELAY IN RATIFYING NPT AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE KIND OF DELAY THE ALLIES MIGHT ENCOUNTER IN ACHIEVING ENTRY INTO FORCE OF PHASE I AGREEMENT.

5. MEESMAN ADDED THAT THE DUTCH HAD AN ADDITIONAL REASON FOR MODIFYING THE U.S. PARA 3 B, WHICH THEY DID NOT INTEND TO RAISE IN SPC AT THIS TIME. THE FIRST SENTENCE OF PARA 3 B REFERS TO A "SPECIFIED PERIOD" OF TIME FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF PHASE I REDUCTIONS. THE SECOND SENTENCE REFERS TO THIS PERIOD BEGINNING WITH ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE AGREEMENT. THIS WOULD SET BAD PRECEDENT FOR PHASE II, SINCE THE NETHERLANDS, AND SOME OF THE OTHER ALLIES, WOULD WANT TO START TAKING THEIR PHASE II REDUCTIONS AS SOON AFTER SIGNATURE OF THE PHASE II AGREEMENT AS POSSIBLE, WITHOUT WAITING FOR ENTRY INTO FORCE. MISSION OFFICER SAID THE U.S. PROPOSAL SIMPLY ESTABLISHED A MAXIMUM PERIOD FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF PHASE I REDUCTIONS, BEGINNING WITH ENTRY INTO FORCE OF PHASE I AGREEMENT, AND DID NOT SAY ANYTHING ABOUT HOW SOON AFTER PHASE II SIGNATURE THE NON-U.S. ALLIES COULD BEGIN THEIR REDUCTIONS. HE SAID THAT IT SEEMED UNNECESSARY FOR DUTCH TO RAISE THIS ISSUE IN CONTEXT OF TIME BETWEEN PHASES.

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6. MEESMAN STRESSED THAT THE NETHERLANDS AGREES WITH THE PRINCIPAL ASPECT OF THE U.S. PROPOSAL, I.E. ON SHORTENING THE DURATION BETWEEN THE TWO PHASES. THE NETHERLANDS' PROBLEM CONCERNS THE SECONDARY ASPECT OF THE U.S. PROPOSAL, I.E. THE MAXIMUM PERIOD FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF PHASE I REDUCTIONS. THE NETHERLANDS RECOGNIZES THAT ITS PROPOSAL MIGHT CAUSE U.S. CONGRESSIONAL PROBLEMS, SINCE IT WOULD COMMIT THE U.S., BEFORE THE ADMINISTRATION HAD SUBMITTED THE PHASE I AGREEMENT FOR LEGISLATIVE APPROVAL, TO COMPLETE ITS REDUCTIONS WITHIN A SPECIFIED PERIOD. HOWEVER, NETHERLANDS BELIEVED THE RATIFICATION PROBLEM SUFFICIENTLY IMPORTANT THAT THE NETHERLANDS HAD TO INTRODUCE ITS AMENDMENT TO THE U.S. PROPOSAL. HE BELIEVED THAT HIS AUTHORITIES WERE NOT WEDDED TO THIS LANGUAGE, BUT WOULD

ACCEPT ANY LANGUAGE WHICH MET DUTCH CONCERNS.

7. COMMENT: MISSION CAN SEE AT LEAST THREE POSSIBLE U.S. RESPONSES TO THE DUTCH POSITION, ASSUMING THAT THE DUTCH PRESENT IT IN SPC SUBSTANTIALLY AS DESCRIBED ABOVE:

A) THE U.S. COULD AGREE WITH THE DUTCH, AND SUPPORT A MAXIMUM TIME FOR PHASE I WITHDRAWALS BEGINNING WITH SIGNATURE, RATHER THAN ENTRY INTO FORCE, OF THE PHASE I AGREEMENT. THE FEASIBILITY OF THIS COURSE WOULD DEPEND ON WASHINGTON JUDGEMENTS RE THE KIND OF U.S. LEGISLATIVE CONSULTATION/APPROVAL WHICH THE PHASE I AGREEMENT MIGHT NEED PRIOR TO IMPLEMENTATION OF U.S. WITHDRAWALS.

B) THE U.S. COULD MAINTAIN ITS PRESENT POSITION ON TIME FOR PHASE I WITHDRAWALS, BUT SEEK TO MAKE THIS A SUBJECT FOR BILATERAL U.S.- SOVIET AGREEMENT. THIS MIGHT SATISFY THE DUTCH, WHO ARE MAINLY CONCERNED WITH POSSIBLE DELAY IN RATIFICATION BY THE OTHER ALLIES. WE NOTE THAT IN BOTH THE FRG AND CANADIAN PROPOSALS ON THE FORM OF THE MBFR AGREEMENT, FIRST PHASE IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES ARE SUBJECTS OF BILATERAL U.S.- SOVIET AGREEMENT (PARA 10 OF TEXT IN REF B, AND PARA 3 (B) OF TEXT OF REF C).

HOWEVER, SOME OF THE OTHER ALLIES MIGHT NOT WISH BILATERAL U.S.-SOVIET AGREEMENT ON U.S.- SOVIET REDUCTIONS TO TAKE EFFECT UNTIL RATIFICATION OF THE MULTILATERAL AGREEMENT ON ISSUES OF GENERAL INTEREST, SUCH AS THE COMMON CEILING CONCEPT. IN THAT EVENT, A BILATERAL U.S.-SOVIET AGREEMENT ON TIME FOR
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IMPLEMENTATION OF PHASE I REDUCTIONS WOULD MEET DUTCH CONCERNS.

C) THE U.S. COULD HOLD OUT FOR ITS PRESENT POSITION ON TIME FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF PHASE I AGREEMENT, TO SEE WHAT REACTION OF OTHER ALLIES WILL BE, AND TO SEE IF DUTCH INTEREST IN SHORTENING THE PERIOD BETWEEN PHASES WILL EVENTUALLY LEAD TO THE DUTCH TO YIELD ON TIME FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF WITHDRAWALS.

8. ACTION REQUESTED: GUIDANCE ON DUTCH POSITION IN TIME FOR SPC MEETING JUNE 9.
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